



Illinois Department of Transportation

# Diversity Matters!

AUGUST 2011

## Office of Diversity Recruitment and Outreach

Effective May 16, 2011, the Diversity Recruitment and Outreach Office was established in the Office of the Secretary at the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). This office will coordinate all IDOT diversity recruiting and outreach efforts. Lesa Branham, formerly a Deputy Director of the Office of Finance and Administration, has been appointed the Chief of Diversity Recruitment and Outreach. The activities of the Diversity Recruitment and Outreach Office are frequently supported by the Office of Communications community relations staff, which performs many outreach activities and initiatives. Diversity Recruitment and Outreach is committed to increasing the number of employees from under-represented groups in IDOT's applicant pool. The goal is to help ensure a reasonable representation comparable to the labor market in Illinois. Diversity Recruitment and Outreach staff consists of a team of four full-time employees, college and graduate interns mainly housed in the IDOT Hanley Building at 2300 South Dirksen Parkway in Springfield, Room 339. Currently, two of the staff members are in the IDOT Chicago offices located at the James R. Thompson Center, 100 West Randolph.

## Message from Acting Secretary Ann L. Schneider

I would like to say thank you to the readers of *Diversity Matters!* for your continued support of transportation in Illinois. On July 1, 2011, I was honored to be appointed Acting Secretary of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) by Governor Pat Quinn. In recent years with IDOT, I have had the privilege of serving as Chief of Operations and as Director of Finance and Administration. With a robust construction season in full swing, I am excited to take on this new role following the retirement of Secretary Gary Hannig, who has provided outstanding leadership for IDOT since his appointment as Secretary in early 2009.

I share the same dedication and commitment as Governor Quinn and Secretary Hannig to help minority contractors and workers gain employment opportunities and find more effective ways to improve minority participation on state and federally funded contracts. Under Governor Quinn's leadership, IDOT has had many successes, including awarding a record amount of more than \$429 million overall for contracts to Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) firms in 2010. IDOT also has increased minority representation on the IDOT Engineering Consultant Selection, established a scholarship program for minorities and women

in engineering programs, implemented two Engineering Technician Training Programs and developed the only federally approved Construction Mentor Protégé program in the nation, which provides DBE firms valuable mentoring support to help them build business and compete for transportation-related contracts. As I begin this new chapter in my career, I want to assure our readers that ensuring improved employment and contracting opportunities for minority and female owned businesses will continue to be a top priority at IDOT. Again, thank you for reading *Diversity Matters!* and for your dedication to the service needs of Illinois. -Ann L. Schneider

## Diversity - A Guiding Principle Every Day at IDOT

Diversity is not just a buzz word at the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) – it is a way of doing business. When Secretary Gary Hannig arrived at IDOT in February 2009, one of the first actions he took was to order the revision of IDOT's guiding principles to include the word *diversity* to help all employees understand the importance of actively seeking and promoting equal opportunity for all Illinois citizens. Since that time, IDOT has made significant progress in ensuring that minority-owned, woman-owned and other disadvantaged small businesses have an equal opportunity to compete for IDOT's federal- and state-funded construction contracts. Thanks to Governor Quinn's landmark Capital Program *Illinois Jobs Now!*,

contracting opportunity for Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) firms has risen dramatically since 2008. In federal fiscal year (FFY) 2010 alone, more than \$268 million worth of highway construction awards/commitments were made to DBE firms (3,815 total prime/subcontracts). This represents an increase of more than \$135 million from the total of \$132.9 million just two years prior in FFY2008 (1,899 total prime/subcontracts). The news is even better in the area of engineering consultant contracts. Awards/commitments to DBE firms increased from \$25 million in FFY2008 (495 total prime/subcontracts) to \$58 million in FFY2009 (642 total prime/subcontracts). Awards/commitments to DBE firms in-

creased again to \$75 million for FFY 2010, which accounted for 22.72 percent of the total selection dollar amount (\$330 million). Much of the credit for this significant increase in contracting diversity can be attributed to the success of IDOT's outreach efforts which saw the number of DBE-certified firms increase from 522 to 631 between 2009 and 2010. Acting IDOT Secretary Ann Schneider will continue to further IDOT's pledge to improve the quality of life for Illinois citizens through diversity and inclusion. With the continuing leadership of Governor Quinn and the General Assembly, IDOT will continue to promote contracting opportunities for disadvantaged small businesses in order to achieve greater inclusion and diversity in all phases of the highway construction industry.

## Notice of August Letting

The Illinois Department of Transportation is preparing for the August letting, which is scheduled for August 5, 2011. With more than \$125 million in road construction projects anticipated for the August letting, the 2011 construction season continues to be a busy one. For more information, visit <http://www.dot.il.gov/desenv/delett.html>.

## IDOT Engineering Academy Encourages Students to Consider Careers in Transportation

In July, the Illinois Department of Transportation collaborated with the Washington Park Chamber of Commerce to host the Summer Engineering Academy at the Ace Technical Charter High School in Chicago. The three-day academy gave area students an opportunity to address real world challenges that face the transportation and civil engineering industries. More than 100 high school students attended the academy and learned about the challenges engineers face on the job

every day. The academy provided the students with a fun, hands-on curriculum that taught math and science within a realistic engineering experience including projects that encourage teamwork, problem solving and practical application.

Engineering academies are designed to give students valuable knowledge and experience to help determine whether they would be interested in pursuing career opportunities in transportation.

## Training Schedule

To view a complete schedule of workshops offered by the Office of Business and Workforce Diversity, please visit <http://www.dot.il.gov/sbe/workshop.html>.

## Upcoming Events

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT
8/9/11	Transportation Industry Jobs and Career Fair	9501 S. King Drive Chicago	Louanner Peters 773-224-6500
8/10/11	East St. Louis VA Helping Hometown Heroes Fair	4500 Pocket Road East St. Louis	East St. Louis DVA 618-583-2065
8/17/11	IDOT Highway Maintainer Resource Fair	630 Martin Luther King Drive Rock Island	Sarahjini Nunn 217-782-2545
8/17/11	IDOT Highway Maintainer Information Session	845 W. 69th Street Chicago	DOT Outreach 312-793-0485
8/18/11	IDOT Highway Maintainer Information Session	3313 Sycamore Street Cairo	Danielle Harrell 217-524-1635
8/18/11	IDOT Highway Maintainer Information Session	201 E. Longstreet Road Marion	Danielle Harrell 217-524-1635
8/19/11	IDOT Highway Maintainer Information Session	TBA Carbondale	Danielle Harrell 217-524-1635
8/19/11	IDOT Highway Maintainer Information Session	TBA Sparta	Danielle Harrell 217-524-1635
8/24/11	IDOT Highway Maintainer Resource Fair	211 N. Main Street Rockford	DOT Outreach 312-793-0485
8/31/11	IDOT Highway Maintainer Resource Fair	TBA Kankakee	Sarahjini Nunn 217-782-2545

## Current Procurement Opportunities

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) announces the current procurement opportunities open for bid:

**Bridge Scour Monitoring System** – IDOT seeks a system to predict when and where rainfall events may generate a discharge capable of undermining bridge foundations. The system needed will monitor the rainfall events and/or water levels at approximately 650 bridges throughout the State susceptible to scour on a 24 hours per day, seven (7) days per week basis.

**Weather Forecasting Services for District 1** - IDOT requires specific weather forecasting services, needed specifically to combat winter snow and ice storms and conditions on state maintained highways. The successful vendor must also be capable of providing specific pavement temperature forecasts and other location specific weather forecasts.

**District 2 Electrical Services** - This is an Invitation for Bid to establish a contract with electrical contractors to repair, provide parts/supplies and labor for District 2's facilities/locations that have electrical problems that are discovered during routine inspection, equipment break downs, improper operations or occupant complaint.

**South Suburban Airport Land Acquisition/Relocation & Property Mgt. Services** – IDOT seeks a vendor to provide land acquisition, relocation assistance and property management services for the purpose of building the South Suburban Airport (SSA) in Will County, Illinois.

**Racial Profiling and Analysis** – IDOT seeks a Vendor to conduct an analysis to detect “statistically significant aberrations” in the traffic stop statistical data provided by law enforcement agencies to the Agency pursuant to the Illinois Vehicle Code, 625 ILCS 5/11-212 Traffic Stop Statistical Study.

For more information, potential vendors can visit the Illinois Procurement Bulletin at [www.purchase.state.il.us](http://www.purchase.state.il.us).